

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/007,690

Examiner

Uyen-Chau N. Le

Applicant(s)

WOJDYLA ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the interview on 9/28/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-4, 8-18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27 and 29-33.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date <u>20070929</u> . |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Riggs on 28 September 2007 in order to place the instant application in the proper form for an allowance by incorporating the limitation of -- wherein the mail producer is identified directly by reading the first source tracing code without accessing the mailing statement -- into each of the independent claims, deleting the phrase "encrypted" in claims 12-17 and 29-32, and other informalities set forth in the amendment below.

The application has been amended as follows:

Re claim 1: Please substitute claim 1 with the following:

-
1. A method for providing traceability of mail pieces, comprising the steps of:
creating a plurality of mail pieces;
providing a first source tracing code on each of said plurality of mail pieces, said first source tracing code corresponding to a mail producer;
creating a mailing statement for said plurality of mail pieces;
providing a second source tracing code on said mailing statement, said second source tracing code corresponding to the mail producer;

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submitting said plurality of mail pieces and the mailing statement to a postal service facility;

and

verifying that said first source tracing code corresponds to said second source tracing code, ~~wherein~~ such that verified mail pieces can be directly traced back to the mail producer by reading the first source tracing code;

wherein the mail producer is identified directly by reading the first source tracing code without accessing the mailing statement. --

Re claim 2, line 3: Substitute "scanning" with -- reading --.

Re claim 8: Please substitute claim 8 with the following:

-- 8. A method for providing traceability of mail pieces, comprising the steps of:

creating a plurality of mail pieces;

providing a first source tracing code on each of said plurality of mail pieces, said first source tracing code corresponding to a mail producer;

creating a mailing statement for said plurality of mail pieces;

providing a second source tracing code on said mailing statement, said second source tracing code corresponding to the first source tracing code ~~mail producer~~;

submitting said plurality of mail pieces and the mailing statement to a postal service facility;

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capturing and recording an identity of an individual submitting said plurality of mail pieces and the mailing statement; and

storing the first or second source tracing code in association with the recorded identity of the individual; and

wherein the identity ~~subsequently using the first or second source tracing code to trace at least one of the plurality of mail pieces back to at least one of the individual submitting the mail pieces and the mail producer~~ are identified directly by reading the first source tracing code without accessing the mailing statement. --

Re claim 12: Please substitute claim 12 with the following:

-- 12. A method for providing traceability of mail pieces, comprising the steps of:

creating a plurality of mail pieces via mail production equipment;

providing ~~an encrypted~~ a source tracing code on each of the plurality of mail pieces via source tracing code producing equipment, the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code corresponding to a creator of the plurality of mail pieces;

scanning each of the plurality of mail pieces to read the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code;

verifying that the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code corresponds to the creator of the mail pieces; and

creating a mailing statement for the plurality of mail pieces via mailing statement producing equipment, the mailing statement including a corresponding source tracing code corresponding to the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on each of the plurality of mail pieces,

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~~wherein~~ such that verified mail pieces can be directly traced back to the creator of the mail pieces by reading the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces;

wherein the creator of the mail pieces is identified directly by reading the source tracing code on the mail pieces without accessing the mailing statement. --

Re claim 13: Please substitute claim 13 with the following:

- 13. The method of Claim 12, further comprising the steps of:
- submitting the plurality of mail pieces and the mailing statement to a postal service facility;
- scanning the mailing statement to read the corresponding source tracing code;
- scanning at least a sampling of the plurality of mail pieces to read the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces; and
- verifying that the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces corresponds to the corresponding source tracing code. --

Re claim 14: Please substitute claim 14 with the following:

- 14. The method of Claim 12, wherein the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces is embedded into a digital image, a text, a watermark, paper fibers or invisible ink, independent of a meter imprint, digital postage mark or postal indicia. --

Re claim 15: Please substitute claim 15 with the following:

- 15. The method of Claim 12, further comprising the steps of capturing and recording the identity of an individual submitting the plurality of mail;

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storing the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces or the corresponding source tracing code in association with the recorded identity of the individual; and

subsequently using the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces or the corresponding source tracing code to trace at least one of the plurality of mail pieces back to at least one of the individual submitting the mail pieces and the creator of the mail pieces. --

Re claim 16: Please substitute claim 16 with the following:

-- 16. The method of Claim 12, wherein the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces is independent from a meter imprint, digital postage mark or postal indicia. --

Re claim 17: Please substitute claim 17 with the following:

-- 17. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of providing an alert indication when the ~~encrypted~~ source tracing code on the mail pieces does not correspond to the corresponding source tracing code. --

Re claim 18: Please substitute claim 18 with the following:

-- 18. A method for providing traceability of mail pieces, comprising the steps of:
receiving at least one mail piece and a mailing statement at a postal service facility;
capturing and storing the identity of an individual submitting the at least one mail piece;
providing a source tracing code on the at least one mail piece and the mailing statement
via source tracing code producing equipment, after the at least one mail piece and the mailing statement has been submitted to the postal facility, the source tracing code on the at least one mail piece corresponding to the source tracing code on the mailing statement; and

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storing information produced by the source tracing code producing equipment in association with the captured and stored identity of the individual submitting the at least one mail piece and the mailing statement; and

wherein the identity of the individual is identified directly by reading using the source tracing code on to trace the at least one mail piece without accessing the mailing statement back to the individual. --

Re claim 29, lines 2 and 3: Delete "encrypted".

Re claim 30: Please substitute claim 30 with the following:

-- 30. A method for providing traceability of mail pieces, comprising the steps of:

providing ~~an encrypted~~ a tracing code corresponding to a mail producer ~~on at least one envelope~~;

marking subsequently providing the at least one envelope having the encrypted with the tracing code to a mailer to produce at least one mail piece;

marking a mailing statement for the at least one envelope with a corresponding tracing code;

recording the identity of the ~~mailer~~ mail producer in association with the ~~encrypted~~ tracing code;

receiving the at least one mail piece at a postal service facility; and

reading the ~~encrypted~~ tracing code on the at least one mail piece and the corresponding tracing code on the mailing statement to verify the mail producer, wherein the mail producer is

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identified directly by reading the tracing code on the at least one envelope without accessing the mailing statement. --

Re claim 31, lines 3 and 4: Delete "encrypted".

Re claim 32: Please substitute claim 32 with the following:

-- 32. The method of Claim 30, further comprising the step of tracing the ~~encrypted~~ tracing code back to the ~~mailer~~ mail producer. --

Re claim 33: Substitute "mailer" with -- mail producer --.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-4,8-18,21,22,24,26,27 and 29-33 are allowed.
3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of records to Cordery et al, Clark et al, Simon, Pintsov and all other cited references, taken alone or in combination, fails to teach or fairly suggest the specific structure or the method for providing traceability of mail piece comprising, among other steps, providing a first source code corresponding to a mail producer on each mail piece, providing a second source code corresponding to the mail producer/first source code on a mailing statement, verifying the mail piece wherein the mail producer/individual submitting the mail piece can be identified directly by reading the first code on the mail piece without accessing the mailing statement as set forth in the claimed combinations.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uyen-Chau N. Le whose telephone number is 571-272-2397. The examiner can normally be reached on maxi-flex.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached on 571-272-2398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Uyen-Chau N. Le
Primary Examiner
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September 28, 2007